WORK OF INYO COUNTY FREE LIBRARY

Inyo County contains 10,224 square miles, and has 7,031 inhabitants by the last census, which is probably not quite as many as we have now. The County Library has 16 community and 29 school branches. Two of the school branches have been inactive the past year, and will probably be consolidated with others soon. This includes all the elementary schools of the county, and two of the four high schools. The service covers the entire county quite completely, there being perhaps two communities lacking branches, but these are supplied through the schools.

The circulation is more than six per capita annually.

The following is a brief statement of the library's finances for the year 1922-23:

Receipts from all sources.....$9081.12

Disbursements:

Books.....	$1700.13,	being 18 5/6 % of income
Periodicals...	511.61	5 3/5 %
Binding.....	187.03	2 3/5 %
Salaries..... (including janitor)	4454.50	48 9/10%

Traveling expenses.....	$ 140.90,	being 1 5/9% of income
Supplies & printing....	206.15	2¼%
Rent.....	150.00	1 2/3%
Furniture & Fixtures...	85.31	1- %
Postage, freight,etc...	311.62	3 4/9%
Fuel & Light.....	139.49	1½%
Apparatus (maps, globes, charts, records, etc.)	337.80	3 2/3%
Unexpended		9½%

Our supervisors and our auditor wish to have the library fund suffice for our needs up to the December tax apportionment; I have been trying to have a large enough balance, July 1, to do that in comfort.

I have one assistant in the office. She is untrained, but has been in the library three and one-half years, so understands her duties very well indeed. In addition to the administrative work, I handle book selection, ordering, classification, cataloging, rebinding, periodicals, bookkeeping, and circulation records.

The assistant does the accessioning, keeps the borrowers' record, and does the mending. Both of us work on shipments, both outgoing and incoming.

Book selection is made chiefly from reviews. We have the U.S. Catalog and supplements, the A.L.A. Booklist, Book Review Digest, New Guide to Reference Books, and several of the best magazine reviews. ~~They form my Sunday reading - sometimes.~~ There are trade lists are gone through regularly & selections made. Requests for new books are encouraged, and are always carefully considered. Purchase is made if the value of the book and the probable demand ~~seem to~~ warrant it. I consult experts for all technical books, and also the recent technical lists in the library periodicals. Bargain lists are carefully scanned for books or sets which are needed.

Up to April 1 of this year, accessions for 1922-23 were as follows:

Adult non-fiction	306
Adult fiction	299
Juvenile non-fiction	208
Juvenile fiction	84
School texts	561
Total	1458

By purchase, 1258
By gift 200

This is a larger proportion of juvenile than my usual plan calls for.

I read and examine as many of the new books as I can, and have the others read by some one whose taste I know.

We have been ordering through a small local bookstore, whose proprietor sends east. We try to have the library's orders and the bookstore's ready at the same time. We get a very good discount in this way, but recently the orders have been filled so slowly that we are expecting to make a change.

We have an author, subject and title catalog, using L.C. cards for non-fiction. We also make an author card for books sent to our two largest branches.

Our shelf list is also our stock list, the branch to which a book is sent being stamped, with the date sent, on the back of the card. A branch card is kept in the same way, and filed, in shelf list order, in the branch file. In this way we can immediately locate each book, and can also tell what and how many books are at each branch.

Text-book charges to a school are made by

the set. This saves a great deal of time in charging and discharging, which is of more value to us than the record by copy number would be. In other respects, books are charged to a school in just the same way as to a community branch. We send each teacher a list of the text-books we have, which causes a much more free use of books which are no longer in the county course of study. For the general reading of the children, we send books as requested, making suggestions by lists of approved books. Where there is a branch with a good children's collection, the teachers prefer to send the pupils to it, and we like to have them do so, as the records are kept more carefully, and the children are forming the library habit. In Big Pine, Bishop, Lone Pine and Independence, we keep a close connection with the schools and the teachers' desires, and almost all the books for recreational reading are sent through the branch.

Shipments are made to each branch on a regular date - to the better established branches monthly, to the smaller branches bi-monthly. In addition, special requests, if the need is immediate, are filled as soon as possible. Requests which cannot be filled from our

collection are forwarded to the State Library, if non-fiction which we do not wish to buy immediately. If fiction, we often try, through the Union Catalog of the State Library, to borrow the book for the special need. We encourage requests from the branches, and have almost daily letters from the larger ones.

Visits to branches are made as need seems to arise. So far this year thirty-three visits have been made to twenty-two branches and schools, and three more will be made this month if possible. School visits, except in the larger places, are very difficult, almost impossible, to make. Collections in the branches are checked at least every second year; most of them each year.

Books lost from a branch, if the fault is plainly the custodian's, are paid for by him. If lost by a borrower, the usual effort is made to collect their value. Fines are five cents a day for over-due books, but this is not collected from such rural borrowers as find it difficult to come to the branch frequently. Any relaxation of rules to permit and encourage use of books by isolated persons is allowed.

Six of our custodians have been in charge of their branches since before I came here.

With the help of the custodians, I have been trying to induce more use of the library for non-fiction and reference, and the response has been noticeable, in all the larger branches, and in such of the smaller ones as the custodian proves a good helper. We try to let our borrowers, and indeed any one in the community, know when we have received such books as will be of interest to them. Often we do this personally. (One of the points which I think Mrs. Best forgot to mention in her talk at Yosemite, was her habit of tucking abook under her arm when she goes to lunch, and leaving it where it will be of most interest. She might have added that she frequently goes after it hen it is due.) Sometimes we have a list or a review in the local papers, or a display in a store or in a library. We use Gaylord's posters freely, and are planning an attack through the movies.

We have called attention to the cultural side by special displays of pictures and books, by programs and celebration of special days and weeks.

We are using the Vacation Reading Club plan with the children this summer.

With so small a staff, short cuts and ready-made plans are a necessity. Fortunately, I can count on nearly all my custodians to help carry out any plan, and some of them are clever in originating good things.

The local papers are also all very friendly, printing any amount of library as news.

I find the supervisors and the county officers very willing to co-operate with the library in any way.